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203 not to cut firewood then; *Hei!* to go as coolies then; *Hei!*
694 to go to work then; *Hei!* to go a journey then; *Hei!* to descend to the valley then; *Hei!* he who has a pouch. *Hei!* he who has a bag. *Hei!* now come forth. *Hei!* now appear. *Hei!* the hearing then is to be all in company. *Hei!* the listening attentively then is to be all together. *Hei!* for his own king. *Hei!* for his own lord, lest destruction has come; lest wearing away has overtaken *us*. *Kaw!* come forth now fellow mates."

This proclamation is called *khang shnong*, and by it all are stopped from going anywhere from the village the following day.
[687] Anybody who disregards the prohibition is liable to fine.
695 The following day, towards evening, all the grown-up males of the village assemble at the durbar ground, the site of which is marked in some villages by rows of flat stones, arranged in an irregular circle, upon which the durbaris sit. The proceedings are opened by one of the headmen, who makes a long speech; then others follow, touching upon all sorts of irrelevant matters, but throwing out hints, now and then, bearing on the subject of accusation. By degrees the debate waxes warmer, and the parties get nearer the point. Then the complainant and the defendant each of them throw down on the ground a turban, or a bag containing betul and *pán*, lime, &c., in front of the durbar. These are regarded as the pledges of the respective parties and their representatives in the suit; they receive the name of *mamla* (hence the Khasi term *ar liang mamla* for the two contending parties in the suit). There are pleaders on both sides called *'riw sdid*, who address the durbar in lengthy speeches, the Siem being the judge and the whole body of the durbar the jury. Witnesses are examined by the parties; in former times they were sworn on a pinch of salt placed on a sword. The most sacred and most binding form of oath, however, is sworn on *u klong* (a hollow gourd containing liquor). As, however, the latter form of oath is regarded by the Khasis as a most serious ordeal, it will be described separately. The
695 durbar sometimes goes on for several days. At length the
782 finding of the durbar is taken, after the Siem has summed up, and sentence is pronounced, which generally consists of a fine in money, almost always accompanied by an order to the losing

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695 party to present a pig. The pig is supposed to be sacrificed
782 to a goddess, *Ka 'lei synshar*, i.e. the goddess of the State,
[776] but it is invariably eaten by the Siem and the members of the durbar. The Siem then calls out "*kumta mo khynraw*" (is it not so, young people?) The members of the durbar then reply, "*haoid kumta khein khynraw*" (yea, it is so, young
681 ones). Sentences of fine are more often resorted to than other
697 punishments nowadays, probably because very few of the Siems possess jails for the reception of criminals. The condemned one in a criminal case frequently serves his time by working for the Siem as a menial servant. The above description, which is based on the account given by the Rev. W. Lewis, with some modifications, may be taken as the usual form of procedure of the Khasi durbar.

682 Under the heading of decision of disputes we may perhaps
782 give a short description of some of the punishments which were inflicted by the Siems and their durbars in criminal cases in ancient times. Murder was punishable by beating the culprit to death with clubs (*ki tangon ki lymban*). The killing, however, of a *nong shoh noh*, i.e. a man who seeks for human victims to sacrifice to the monster, *u thlen*, is not considered murder, even now by the Khasis, and the slayer of the *nong shoh noh* only has to inform the Siem and deposit Rs. 5, and one pig in the Siem's court. The slaying of a robber also is dealt with in like manner.

684 The punishment of adultery was imprisonment for life (*ka sah dain mur*), or a fine of Rs. 1,100, and one pig (*ka khadwei spah wei doh*). Whether such a heavy fine was ever paid is perhaps doubtful, and probably some other form of punishment was substituted for it. A husband finding his wife and a man in *flagrante delicto* could, as under the law of the ancients, kill both adulterer and adulteress without punishment for murder. He was, however, bound to deposit Rs. 5, and the conventional pig in the Siem's durbar. The punishment for rape (*kaba khniot tynga*) was imprisonment for life in the case of the woman being married, and a heavy fine and one pig if the
685 woman was a spinster. Arson was punishable with imprison-
683 ment for life, or a heavy fine. The punishment for causing people to be possessed by devils (*ka ba ai-ksuid briew*) was

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683 exile (*pyrangkang par*); but if a person so possessed died, the
685 sorcerer was hurled down a precipice (*pynnoh khongpong*). The punishment for robbery and theft was the stocks (*ka pyndait diengsong*), the imposition of fetters, or a punishment known as *kaba s'ang sohmynken*, by which the culprit was compelled to sit on a bamboo platform under which chillies were burnt. The result of such torture can be better imagined than described.

684 Incest, or *sang*, which, amongst the Khasis means cohabiting
626 with a member of a man's or woman's own clan, was punishable with exile or a fine of Rs. 550/- and one pig. It is believed by the Khasis that the evils resultant from incestuous connection are very great; the following are some of them: being struck by lightning, being killed by a tiger, dying in childbirth, &c.

DECISION OF CASES BY ORDEAL.

1.—*Water Ordeal.*

695 In ancient times the Khasis used to decide certain cases by means of water ordeal (*ka ugam um*). Yule, writing in 1844, mentions a water ordeal, and one of my Khasi friends remembers to have seen one during his boyhood. There were two kinds of such ordeals. The first, called *ka ugam ksih*, was as follows:—The two disputants in a case would each of them fix a spear under water in some deep pool. They would then dive and catch hold of the spear. The man who remained longest under water without returning to the surface was adjudged by the Siem and durbar to have won the case. Colonel Maxwell, late Superintendent of the Manipur State, witnessed a similar ordeal in the Manipur State in the year 1903, when two Manipuris dived to the bottom of a river and held on to stones, the result being that one man, who remained under water in the most determined way, was very nearly drowned. Amongst the Khasis sometimes the supporters of the contending parties used to compel the divers to remain under water by holding them down with their spears. Another form of trial was to place two pots, each of them containing a piece of gold and a piece of silver wrapped up in cloths, in shallow water. The two contending parties

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were then directed to plunge their hands into the water and take up, each of them, one of the packets. The party who brought up a piece of gold was adjudged the victor. If both parties brought up either gold or silver, then the case was amicably settled by the Durbar, and if it was a land case, the land was equally divided between the parties. No instances of trial of cases by such ordeals have come to notice of late years. Yule, referring to water ordeals, says: "I have been told that it was lawful to use the services of practised attorneys in this mode of trial; so that long-winded lawyers have as decided a preference in these regions as they have elsewhere."

2.—*Ordeal by U Klong, or by U Klong U Khnam, in the Wár Country.*

Of all the ordeals these are the most dreaded by the Khasis. They believe that if a person swears falsely by *u klong* or *u klong u khnam*, he will die or, if he represents his family (i.e. wife and children) or his clan (*kur*), that his family and his clan will die out. Siems, Wahadadars, Lyngdohs, &c., do not order litigants, or even propose to them, to have their cases decided by this ordeal, fearing to incur blame for choosing it, owing to possible evil consequence thereafter to the parties. One of the parties must propose and the other must accept the ordeal, of their own accord and in open Court or Durbar. A gourd (*u klong*) containing fermented rice (*ka sohpoh*) is provided, and a feathered arrow with a barbed iron head is planted in the fermented rice. The following is the procedure:—

The person who wishes to take the oath brings a gourd of fermented rice, or a gourd with an arrow stuck in it, as the case may be, and makes it over to the judge, or a deputy appointed by such judge for this duty. The latter, before returning it to him, invokes the goddess as follows:—

"Come down, and bear witness, thou goddess who reignest above and below, who createst man, who placest him (on earth), who judgest the right and the wrong, who givest him being and stature, (i.e.) life. Thou goddess of the State, thou goddess of the place, who preservest the village, who preservest the State,

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695 come down and judge. If this man's cause be unrighteous, then shall he lose his stature (being), he shall lose his age (life), he shall lose his clan, he shall lose his wife and children; only the posts of his house shall remain, only the walls of his house shall remain, only the small posts and the stones of the fireplace shall remain; he shall be afflicted with colic, he shall be racked with excruciating pains, he shall fall on the piercing arrow, he shall fall on the lacerating arrow, his dead body shall be carried off by kites, it shall be carried off by the crows, his family and his clan shall not find it; he shall become a dog, he shall become a cat, he shall creep in dung, he shall creep in urine, and he shall receive punishment at thy hands, oh, goddess, and at the hands of man. If, on the other hand, his cause be righteous (lit. *lada u kren hok*) he shall be well, he shall be prosperous, he shall live long, he shall live to be an elder, he shall rise to be a defender and preserver of his clan, he shall be a master of tens and a master of hundreds (immensely rich), and all the world shall see it. Hear, oh, goddess, thou who judgest." (The whole of this invocation is uttered while a libation is poured out from *u klong*.)

U klong is next invoked as follows:—

"Thou, *u klong*, with whose assistance—according to our religion and our custom, a man when he is born into the world is named—hear and judge. If he speaks falsely (his cause be false), his name shall be cut off (by thee) and he shall surely die."

The fermented rice is then invoked as follows:—

"Thou yeast, thou charcoal, thou rice of the plough, thou rice of the yoke, thou, too, hear and judge. If he speaks falsely, eat off his tongue, eat away his mouth."

The arrow is lastly invoked as follows:—

"Thou piercing and lacerating arrow, as thou hast been ordained by the goddess, who creates man, who appoints man to occupy a pre-eminent place in war and in controversy, do thou hear and judge. If he (i.e. the man taking the oath) speaks falsely, let him fall upon thee, let him be cut and be torn, and let him be afflicted with shooting and pricking pains." The man then takes *u klong* or, *u klong u khnam*, and holds it on his head, and while in that posture utters the same

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invocation. *U klong* is then made over to the judge (the Siem or the Sirdar as the case may be, &c.).

The person who undergoes the above ordeal wins the case, the production of evidence being unnecessary.

WAR.

Although the Khasis, unlike the Nagas, the Garos, the wild Was of Burma, the Dayaks of Borneo, and other head-hunting tribes, cannot be said to have indulged in head-hunting in ancient times, as far as we know, merely for the sake of collecting heads as trophies, there seems to be some reference to a custom of head-hunting in a description of the worship of the god *u Syngkai Bámon*, one of the principal gods of war amongst the Khasis. This god is described in one of the folk tales (I have obtained it through the kindness of Dr. Roberts, the Welsh missionary at Cherrapunji) as being the deity who gives the heads of the enemy to the successful warriors. To this god, as well as to *Ka Rám Shandi*, they offer a cock. Before sacrifice the warriors dance round an altar, upon which are placed a plume of cock's feathers (*u thuia*), a sword, a shield, a bow, an arrow, a quiver, *pán* leaves, and flowers. After the cock has been sacrificed, they fix its head on the point of a sword and shout three times. The fixing of the cock's head on the point of a sword is said to have been symbolical of the fixing of the human head of an enemy killed in battle, on the top of the *soh-lang* tree. Mr. Shadwell, of Cherrapunji, whose memory carries him back to the time when the British first occupied the Khasi Hills, has a recollection of a Khasi dance at Cherra, round an altar, upon which the heads of some *Dykhars*, or plains people, killed in a frontier raid had been placed. The Khasis used to sacrifice to a number of other gods also for success in battle. An interesting feature of the ancient combats between the people of different Siemships was the challenge. When the respective armies had arrived at a little distance from one another, they used to stop to hear each other shout the *'tiên-Blei*, or challenge, to the other side. This custom was called *pyrta 'tien-Blei*, or shouting out the